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AUTHOR Crawford, Walt; Gorman, Michael
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ABSTRACT

Policymakers and library administrators are being drawn to the idea of the "virtual library" and the "library without walls," the webs of electronic resources that supposedly will displace books, physical libraries, and most library staff, and are believing the virtual library to be imminent, adequate, and cost-effective. This book describes the virtualists and offers a counter-argument to "technolust," which assumes that every new technological improvement is worthwhile. Librarians are shown how they can embrace advanced technologies while retaining their libraries' role as service-oriented repositories of all formats of organized information and knowledge. Evidence is presented for the continuing value of books and print collections among diverse media, the electronic publishing industry and its illusions are targeted, a "survival guide to the serials crisis" is offered, and the economics of collections and access are analyzed. (Contains 74 references.) (MAS)

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